THE CHILLING ARCHIVES OF HORROR COMICS!™

HAUNTED HORROR™

#25

Mr. KARSWELL

HORRORS OF IT ALL SPECIAL!

Mr. Karswell illustration and Horrors of it All logo art by Drazen Kozjan.

HORRORS OF IT ALL SPECIAL!

GREETINGS ***HAUNTED HORRORHEADS!*** THE COMIC BOOK YOU NOW HOLD IN YOUR TERRIBLE LITTLE CLAWS IS MERELY THE START OF A SPECIAL, THREE-ISSUE ***"HORRORS OF IT ALL"*** MINISERIES. IT'S A GRUESOME SHOCKER COMPILING MY ALL-TIME ***GRAVEST*** HITS STRAIGHT OUTTA THE ABYSS!

THOSE OF YOU GUTSY ENOUGH TO OPEN THIS TRIO OF TRULY ***REPUGNANT ISSUES*** WILL FIND AN ABSOLUTE OVERLOAD OF STOMACH-CHURNING ***EVIL*** AND ***CORRUPTION***. YES, SUPERNATURAL CREEPS AND FEROCIOUS FIENDS WILL PERFORM ALL SEVEN LEVELS OF ***BLOOD-CURDLING SAVAGERY*** UPON YOU, FEATURING ASTONISHING ARTWORK FROM SOME OF YOUR FAVORITES, AS WELL AS FROM A FEW YOU MIGHT NOT EXPECT!

SO, EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED! PREPARE TO HAVE YOUR MINDS BLOWN, YOUR BRAINS BASHED IN, YOUR... YOUR... ***OH, JUST GET READING THE DAMNED THING ALREADY!***

If you collect horror comics and other Golden Age fare, we're always looking for scans for use in our books and comics. Please contact Craig Yoe through Facebook.

This special issue was edited by Mr. Karswell of The Horrors Of It All blog http://thehorrorsofitall.blogspot.com.
Editors: Steve Banes, Clizia Gussoni, and Craig Yoe.

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On the cover, *Weird Mysteries* #3, February 1953. Art: Bernard Baily. Stanley Morse.

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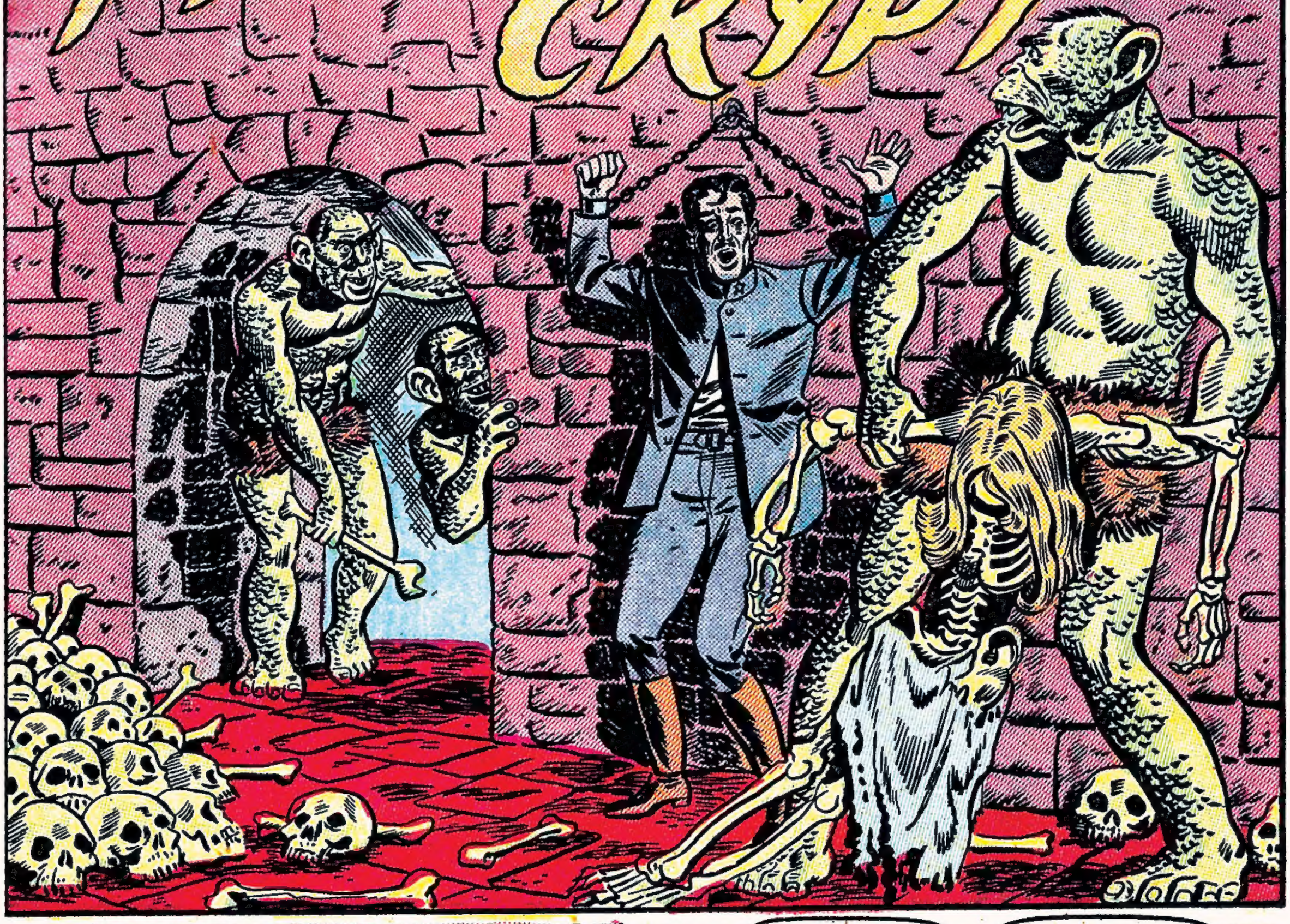
UP FROM THE FETID STENCH OF ROME'S ANCIENT CATACOMBS SWARMED THE HORRIBLE ARMY — STRANGE AND SINISTER BEYOND BELIEF, SWORN TO DESTROY HUMANITY IN THEIR TERRIBLE BONE CRUNCHING JAWS, SLAVERING AFTER THE SMELL OF HUMAN BLOOD! AND TO THIS FEARFUL SCOURGE WAS ADDED THE GREED AND LUST FOR POWER OF ONE MAN WHO IN TURN WAS TO MEET **THE GREEN HORDE...**

FIENDS from the CRYPT



Fantastic Fears #8, July 1953. Art: Iger Shop. Publisher: Farrell.

HE'S GETTING AWAY, SIGNOR COMMISSIONER!

NOT YET! I KNOW THESE SEWERS AS WELL AS HE DOES!

WHY DON'T YOU FIRE, SIGNOR?

NO! I WANT TO TAKE THIS ONE ALIVE IF I CAN! AFTER ALL, HE'S ONLY A PETTY CROOK!

UGH, THESE SEWER RATS GIVE ME THE CREEPS! LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THEM!

DON'T BE AN OLD WOMAN! HURRY UP!

I'M CERTAIN HE DUCKED DOWN THIS WAY! AND THIS PASSAGE LEADS INTO THE OLD CATACOMBS, SO HE CAN'T GET FAR!

SUDDENLY THE TUNNEL IS FILLED WITH THE FRENZIED SCREAMS OF A MAN IN MORTAL TERROR...

THEIR FLASHLIGHTS PICK OUT A LEERING, GRUESOME THING...

FOR THE LOVE OF HEAVEN, SIGNOR! DID YOU HEAR THAT?

HORRIBLE! AND THAT WAS BANCO'S VOICE! DOWN THIS WAY!

GAAA! LOOK, IT'S BANCO! A MOMENT AGO. HE WAS A MAN— NOW HE'S ONLY A S-SKELETON!

B-BUT WHAT COULD HAVE DONE THIS, SIGNOR?

THERE IS SOMETHING EVIL IN THIS PLACE, SIGNOR COMMISSIONER! LET US GET OUT OF HERE AT ONCE!

KEEP YOUR NERVE, MAN! THERE MUST BE SOME EXPLANATION FOR ALL THIS! BUT WE'D BETTER REPORT BACK TO THE STATION!

BUT...

THE PASSAGE—IT'S BLOCKED NOW! B-BUT JUST A MOMENT AGO THERE WAS NO DOOR HERE!

WE MUST FIND ANOTHER WAY OUT, SIGNOR! AT ONCE!

WHILE DESPERATELY SEEKING A WAY OUT, THE MEN WANDER DEEPER INTO THE CATACOMBS...

PHEW, THAT SMELL IS HORRIBLE! THESE CAVERNS HAVE BEEN SEALED FOR CENTURIES!

I BEGIN TO THINK WE ARE TRAPPED, SIGNOR! AND JUST THEN I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHING!

YAAAAAAAA! SIGNOR, LOOK! THOSE THINGS...

MONSTERS—AND THEY'RE COMING AFTER US! THEY'LL TEAR US TO PIECES!

RUN FOR YOUR LIFE, MAN! *RUN!*

AGRRRR—

UBBLEE-

THEY TAKE REFUGE IN A SMALL ROOM...

PERHAPS THIS OLD COFFIN AND THE BONES WILL STOP THEM!

WORK, MAN! STACK MORE BONES IN THE ENTRANCE!

LOOK! ONE OF THOSE THINGS R-REACHING FOR US!

Y-YES! IT WILL GET US UNLESS WE DO SOME-THING!

AND THERE IS ONLY ONE THING TO DO—GIVE THEM A VICTIM AT ONCE!

GRUM— BRRRRR— GROUU—

YOU, PIETRO! THEY WANT A VICTIM AND IT MUST BE ONE OF US! SO LET IT BE YOU! OUT YOU GO!

NO! AAAAAAAA—

SAVE ME! DON'T LET THEM... EEEEEYAAAAAAA—

THERE IS A MOMENT OF DREADFUL RESPITE, THEN THE CREATURES COME CRASHING IN...

ERGG—DROOOO— GUBB!

T-THEY WANT ME NOW! UGH— WHAT MONSTERS THEY ARE— FIENDS OUT OF HADES!

BUT SURPRISINGLY...

DNN-GA- GUMBLE!

T-THEY-RE TRYING TO TALK TO ME! THEY WANT SOMETHING!

WUM- WUM- GA!

THE FIERCE MONSTERS DO INDEED WANT TO MAKE A BARGAIN— AND AFTER A LONG TIME, SIGNOR RENZI UNDERSTANDS WHAT THEY WANT! AT THE SAME TIME HE HATCHES A FIENDISH PLAN OF HIS OWN...

ALL RIGHT, YOU—THINGS! I'LL DO WHAT YOU WANT, BUT REMEMBER THAT YOU MUST OBEY ME, IN RETURN!

OOO-LA!

SOON AFTERWARD A REIGN OF TERROR BEGINS IN ROME! SIGNOR RENZI, COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, SEES HIS CHANCE TO MAKE A FORTUNE...

THIS IS THE NIGHT! THOSE BRUTES SHOULD BE STRIKING NOW!

AT THAT MOMENT IN THE VAULT OF THE BANK OF ROME...

W-WHAT! AN EARTHQUAKE? NO, S-SOMETHING COMING UP THROUGH THE FLOOR! I'D BETTER GET HELP AT ONCE!

BUT IT'S TOO LATE...

MOS-GLUR-TUM-BAB! URGGGG!

YIEEEEEEEE-

AND THE WEIRD CREATURES, INTELLIGENT ENOUGH TO FOLLOW SIGNOR RENZI'S ORDERS, LOOT THE VAULT OF MILLIONS IN GOLD...

BRAM-WUG!

SNORG!

WUF!

LATER AS THE SIGNOR KEEPS A RENDEZVOUS IN THE GLOOMY CATACOMBS...

YOU HAVE DONE WELL, YOU BRUTES! AND DON'T WORRY, YOU'LL BE PAID!

GARN-LUB

MOLID

THEY'LL MAKE ME THE RICHEST MAN IN THE WORLD BEFORE LONG! AND WHO WILL SUSPECT ME?

GRUM- BOOOOO-

COME ALONG NOW AND GET YOUR- (SHUDDER)- REWARD! JUST DOWN HERE THE CATACOMBS RUN UNDER A DISPLACED PERSONS CAMP! YOU CAN HAVE THEM!

UGHHR!-

MORBA-

MMFFFF-

RIGHT UP THIS LADDER NOW! IT LEADS INTO THE D.P. BARRACKS!

BOOGLE!

THIS IS A TERRIBLE THING I'M DOING, BUT I MUST! I PROMISED THEM VICTIMS IN RETURN FOR OBEDIENCE- AND IF I DON'T GIVE THEM THESE PEOPLE, THEY'LL TAKE- ME!

FROM ABOVE COMES A SUDDEN, HORRIBLE OUTCRY...

AAA- HELP!

GRUNNNT-

THOSE CREATURES! SAVE US! HELP!

EEEEEEE-

DORN PHLUUU-

N-NO! OHHHHHHH- AAAAAAAAAAA!

I CAN'T STAND THOSE TERRIBLE SOUNDS ANY LONGER! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE I GO MAD!

TIME PASSES AND SIGNOR RENZI ACCUMULATES ALL THE WEALTH THAT ONE MAN COULD WANT! AND NOW...

WHAT A TENDER SCENE—MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER, HAPPY AND SUSPECTING NOTHING! BUT IF THEY ONLY KNEW HOW THOSE CREATURES HAUNT ME NIGHT AND DAY— ALWAYS WANTING MORE VICTIMS!

I HAVE MORE MONEY THAN A DOZEN MEN COULD EVER SPEND—BUT IT'S NO GOOD UNLESS I CAN GET AWAY FROM THOSE FIENDS OF THE CATACOMBS! SOMEHOW I MUST TAKE MY LOVED ONES AND ESCAPE!

AHH— THERE'S ONE OF THEM NOW, COME TO COMPLAIN BECAUSE THERE ARE NO MORE VICTIMS! WELL, MIGHT AS WELL HAVE THE SHOWDOWN NOW!

LISTEN AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND! YOU MUST GO BACK TO THE CATACOMBS FOREVER! THERE WILL BE NO MORE VICTIMS FOR YOU, EVER! IT'S BECOMING TOO DANGEROUS! NOW GET OUT!

WUGG?

I SAID GET OUT, YOU FOUL BEAST OF HADES! WE'RE ALL THROUGH! OUR BARGAIN IS OVER! OUT! OUT!

BUT SIGNOR RENZI IS SHOCKED FROM HIS HYSTERIA BY THE PATHETIC SCREAMS OF HIS WIFE AND SMALL DAUGHTER...

GOOD HEAVENS— THEY'RE CARRYING THEM AWAY TO THE CATACOMBS, AND I'M POWERLESS TO STOP THEM!

EEEEEEEE-

HELP!

FRANTICALLY SIGNOR RENZI FINDS A SECRET PASSAGE AND RACES TO THE RENDEZVOUS IN THE CATACOMBS...

I'VE GOT TO BE IN TIME! I MUST! M—MAYBE THEY WON'T HARM THEM—PERHAPS THEY'RE ONLY TRYING TO BLUFF ME!

GUR!—

BOFFE—

M—MY WIFE—MY DAUGHTER? ARE THEY SAFE? YOU MUST TELL ME— I'LL DO ANYTHING, DO YOU HEAR? ANYTHING!

THEN THE SIGNOR HEARS A HORRIBLE LAUGHTER BEHIND HIM AND TURNS TO SEE A SIGHT THAT SENDS HIS BRAIN REELING IN TORMENT...

SMUR-DA!

AHHHHHHHHHHHHHH—

AND THE THINGS CLOSE IN...

MOFT—

SNOOG—

AFTER M-ME NOW! THEY'LL K-KILL ME, TOO!

GNNNNNNNNN—

ERS-DA-ESTT-GN-BOR-TA!
*

The End

*MEANING: HE WAS A FOOL AND A KNAVE, AND WAS DOOMED FROM THE START!

VAMPIRE'S DAUGHTER!

THIS BLOOD-CURDLING LITTLE TALE ABOUT A HOLLYWOOD MOVIE QUEEN WILL MAKE YOU CLAMOR FOR AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LOVELY, LOVELY LADY ...KNOWN AS..... *THE VAMPIRE'S DAUGHTER!*

HARRY HEFF, THE FAMOUS HOLLYWOOD PRODUCER, AND HIS ACE CAMERAMAN WERE OUT ON A SEARCH FOR AUTHENTIC BACKGROUNDS FOR THE LATEST IN HIS SUCCESSFUL SERIES OF HOLLYWOOD MOVIES WHEN---

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT, PAUL?

IT'S A NATURAL, MR. HEFF! JUST THE RIGHT BACKGROUNDS FOR YOUR NEW MOVIE, VAMPIRE'S CASTLE!

I SAW A LIGHT IN AN UPPER WINDOW! SOMEBODY LIVES HERE! JUDGING FROM THE STATE OF DISREPAIR, HE HASN'T MUCH MONEY TO FIX UP THE PLACE!

HE'LL PROBABLY BE GLAD TO MAKE A FEW DOLLARS RENTING OUT HIS HOME FOR A MOVIE SET!

Strange Stories from Another World #5, February 1953. Script: Bill Woolfolk; art: Sheldon Moldoff. Publisher: Fawcett.

AS THE HEAVY IRON KNOCKER FELL AGAIN, THERE WAS AN ANSWERING RUSTLE OF NOISE WITHIN THE OLD CASTLE! THEN THE DOOR GRATED OUTWARD!

WHY, IT'S A YOUNG LADY! WE'D LIKE TO TALK TO THE OWNER OF THIS PLACE!

I...I AM THE OWNER, SIR!

YOU'RE THE OWNER! B-BUT YOU CAN'T BE MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS OLD! YOU CAN'T LIVE HERE ALONE!

MY FATHER USED TO BE HERE...WITH ME! BUT HE DIED TWO YEARS AGO!

EXCITEDLY, THE CAMERAMAN, PAUL, DREW HARRY HEFF TO ONE SIDE!

SAY, BOSS, I'VE NEVER SEEN A MORE PHOTOGENIC FACE THAN THIS GIRL HAS! SHE'S BEAUTIFUL...AND IN JUST THE RIGHT KIND OF **SINISTER** WAY!

YOU'RE RIGHT! WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF IT?

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A STAR IN HOLLYWOOD, YOUNG LADY? I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR AN UNKNOWN TO BE THE LEAD IN MY NEW MOVIE, "VAMPIRE'S CASTLE"!

VAMPIRES?

HA-HA! NOT REAL VAMPIRES, OF COURSE! JUST STUFF TO FRIGHTEN THE CUSTOMERS IN A **NICE** WAY! HAVEN'T YOU EVER SEEN A MOTION PICTURE?

W-WHY NO! FATHER NEVER LET ME GO ANYWHERE OUTSIDE OF THIS HOUSE!

SHE WAS PERFECT! ALMOST TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE! BEFORE PAUL SPOKE TO HIM, HARRY HEFF COULD ALREADY SEE THE PUBLICITY BUILD-UP!

GET IT, MR. HEFF? WE'LL TELL THE PUBLIC WE'VE DONE THE IMPOSSIBLE! WE FOUND A **GENUINE VAMPIRE** TO PLAY THE LEAD IN YOUR NEXT HORROR FILM!

WILL THE PUBLIC FALL FOR IT?

OF COURSE THEY WILL---PROVIDED YOU GET A CERTAIN PUBLICITY MAN TO HANDLE THE JOB!

JED MATHEWS! HE COULD SELL THE PUBLIC ANYTHING! HE GETS A BIG FEE, OF COURSE, AND HE'S A QUEER DUCK SOMETIMES! BUT, IN THIS CASE, IT'LL BE WORTH HIRING HIM!

I-I DON'T THINK I LIKE THE IDEA, GENTLEMEN! PLEASE GO!

DON'T BE SILLY, YOUNG LADY! THIS IS YOUR LUCKY DAY! WE'RE GOING TO MAKE YOU **FAMOUS!**

THINGS HAPPEN QUICKLY IN HOLLYWOOD! SOON AFTERWARD, DRESSED IN A STUNNING NEW OUTFIT, ALTHEA WAS PRESENTED TO FAMED PUBLICITY GENIUS, JED MATHEWS!

WELL, JED, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HER? ISN'T SHE EVERYTHING I SAID SHE WAS?

SHE'S ATTRACTIVE ENOUGH! AND THERE IS A CERTAIN SINISTER AIR ABOUT HER!

I LIKE HER BACKGROUND, REALLY LIVING IN THAT OLD CASTLE! WE CAN **PROVE** THAT, AT LEAST! THAT COULD BE THE STARTING POINT OF THE BUILD-UP!

THEN YOU'LL TAKE HER ON?

ALTHEA--THE VAMPIRE QUEEN OF HOLLYWOOD, EH? THIS JOB APPEALS TO MY SENSE OF HUMOR! I'LL HANDLE THE PUBLICITY, HARRY! AND I PROMISE YOU, IT WILL BE THE BIGGEST **HOAX** EVER PLAYED ON THE PUBLIC!

GREAT, JED! I'LL LEAVE THE DETAILS STRICTLY UP TO YOU!

JED MATHEWS WAS THE GREATEST PUBLICITY MAN IN HOLLYWOOD! HE WAS A STRANGE MAN, WHOSE METHODS WERE NEVER KNOWN TO ANYONE BUT HIMSELF! BUT SHORTLY AFTERWARD, NEWSPAPER GOSSIP COLUMNS BEGAN TO HUM WITH ITEMS ABOUT THE MYSTERIOUS GIRL PLAYING THE VAMPIRE QUEEN IN HARRY HEFF'S LATEST MASTERPIECE OF HORROR!

THE FACT THAT THE CAMERA WORK ON THE PICTURE WAS DONE ONLY AT NIGHT, WITH DOUBLE WAGES PAID TO THE TECHNICIANS AND CAMERAMEN, RAISED INEVITABLE QUESTIONS. WHY DID ALTHEA REFUSE TO WORK DURING THE DAY?

WHEN MOVIE FAN MAGAZINES TRIED TO ARRANGE FOR AN INTERVIEW, THE ANSWER WAS ALWAYS THE SAME!

SORRY! I HAVEN'T ANY IDEA WHERE ALTHEA IS STAYING! BUT SHE ALWAYS SHOWS UP FOR WORK ON HER NEW PICTURE---JUST AFTER SUNSET!

AS THE RUMORS GREW, THERE WAS PLENTY OF NEW EVIDENCE TO FEED THE PUBLICITY MILLS! THERE WAS THE TIME ALTHEA THREW A TANTRUM BECAUSE THERE WAS A MIRROR ON THE MOVIE SET!

GET IT OFF! YOU HEARD WHAT ALTHEA SAID! SHE HATES MIRRORS!

AND THE TIME THAT---

I TOLD YOU NEVER TO SET A TABLE WITH GENUINE SILVER CUTLERY!

ULP! I-I'M SORRY, MISS!

THAT HOLLYWOOD BUILD-UP IS WONDERFUL! AFTER A WHILE, IT EVEN CONVINCED PEOPLE WHO SHOULD KNOW BETTER! SOON, EVERYONE IN THE COUNTRY HAD HEARD THAT THE NEW MOVIE QUEEN, ALTHEA WAS A REAL VAMPIRE!

AND WHEN THE BOX OFFICE RETURNS POURED IN...

VAMPIRE'S CASTLE IS THE BIGGEST HIT I EVER PRODUCED! CONGRATULATIONS, ALTHEA! I'M GOING TO TEAR UP YOUR OLD CONTRACT AND GIVE YOU A SUBSTANTIAL RAISE!

I'M SORRY, MR. HEFF! I'M QUITTING!

(COUGH!) WHAT'S THAT YOU SAID? YOU'RE JOKING!

NOT A BIT! I DON'T WANT TO BE KNOWN AS A VAMPIRE QUEEN! I WANT PEOPLE TO LOVE ME.... NOT FEAR ME!

TSK-TSK! ALWAYS A FLY IN THE OINTMENT, ISN'T THERE? JUST WHEN ALTHEA HAD BECOME THE BIGGEST BOX OFFICE ATTRACTION IN THE COUNTRY, SHE WENT TEMPERAMENTAL! BUT LEAVE IT TO THOSE HOLLYWOOD GENIUSES, IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE ALTHEA ACQUIRED A STEADY BEAU!

IT WAS NONE OTHER THAN JED MATHEWS HIMSELF! OF COURSE, ALTHEA DIDN'T KNOW THAT JED WAS DATING HER BY REQUEST, AND BEING EXTREMELY WELL-PAID FOR IT!

YOU LOOK BEAUTIFUL TONIGHT, MY DEAR!

WHERE SHALL IT BE? THE NUCAMBO CLUB, OR...

I-I JUST FEEL LIKE DRIVING ALONG WITH YOU IN THE MOONLIGHT, JED! I WANT TO TALK TO YOU!

NOT LONG AFTERWARD...

WE'VE SEEN EACH OTHER EVERY NIGHT FOR A MONTH, JED! YOU'RE THE ONLY MAN I'VE EVER MET WHO WASN'T FRIGHTENED OFF BY THAT SILLY LEGEND ABOUT MY BEING A VAMPIRE!

IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU, I'D HAVE LEFT HOLLYWOOD LONG AGO! I LOVE YOU! MARRY ME, JED!

PLEASE, ALTHEA, DON'T SAY THAT!

WHY NOT? YOU MUST LOVE ME, TOO, JED, OR YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SEEING ME SO OFTEN!

Y-YOU'RE SWEET, ALTHEA! BUT I CAN'T MARRY YOU!

ALTHEA BROKE DOWN AND CRIED THEN! WHILE SHE WAS DRYING HER TEARS, JED TRIED TO REASON WITH HER!

IT'S NOTHING PERSONAL, ALTHEA! BELIEVE ME, YOU'RE A LOVELY, DESIRABLE WOMAN, BUT...

I KNOW! YOU BELIEVE THAT VAMPIRE STORY, TOO, DON'T YOU? THAT'S THE ONLY REASON YOU..

SUDDENLY ALTHEA STOPPED! SHE COULDN'T GO ON SPEAKING! HER VOICE WAS LOCKED IN HER THROAT! IN HER POCKETBOOK MIRROR, SHE SAW THAT THERE WAS NO REFLECTION OF THE MAN BESIDE HER!

JED! JED, YOU'RE...

OH, NO! IT ISN'T POSSIBLE! YOU'RE A VAMPIRE!

POOR, DEAR ALTHEA! HOW I WISH YOU HAD NEVER FOUND OUT!

BUT SINCE YOU HAVE, I REALLY DON'T HAVE ANY CHOICE EXCEPT...

EEEEE!

YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN THE FUNERAL THEY GAVE HER! ONE OF THE MOST LAVISH HOLLYWOOD EVER SAW! EVERYONE WAS THERE ...EXCEPT JED MATHEWS! BUT, OF COURSE, HOW COULD HE BE? FUNERALS ARE HELD IN THE DAYTIME...AND VAMPIRES ONLY LEAVE THE EARTH OF THEIR OWN COFFINS AT NIGHT HEH-HEH-HEHHH!

JACK KARVEN KNEW WHAT HE WANTED! HE WANTED THE GIRL! BUT HER FAMILY DIDN'T APPROVE--WITH GOOD REASON--AND THERE WAS EVEN SOME DOUBT ABOUT HOW THE OBJECT OF HIS AFFECTIONS FELT ABOUT HIM! THAT'S WHY KARVEN ATTENDED THE MASQUERADE, AND WHY HE MADE THE FATAL MISTAKE OF WEARING... HEH-HEH... THE

DEVIL'S MASK!

33-13

IN ALL OF THE CITY OF NOKRA, THE FAME OF THE MASQUER'S SHOP WAS KNOWN! NO ONE MADE MASKS SO LIFELIKE, SO AMUSING, AND SOMETIMES SO TERRIBLE, AS PAPA DEMETRIO! ONE DAY, TO PAPA DEMETRIO'S SHOP, THERE CAME A CERTAIN JACK KARVEN!

MAY I HELP YOU, SIR?

I AM LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO WEAR TO A MASQUERADE!

This Magazine Is Haunted #9, February 1953. Script: Bill Woolfolk; art: Bob McCarty. Publisher: Fawcett.

I HAVE MANY INTERESTING MASKS, SIR! ONE OF GENGHIS KHAN, PERHAPS? OR HAMLET? HOW ABOUT...?

NONE OF YOUR ORDINARY MASKS! THIS IS FOR A VERY *SPECIAL* OCCASION!

AS KARVEN LOOKED AROUND THE SHOP, HIS EYES FELL UPON A MASK OF DIABOLICALLY CLEVER DESIGN!

AH! THIS IS THE ONE I WANT!

OH, NO, SIR! THAT IS NOT FOR SALE!

DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, OLD MAN! IT IS THE ONE I WISH TO PURCHASE! GIVE IT TO ME!

I CANNOT, SIR! YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND!

THAT IS THE *DEVIL'S MASK!* IT HAS STRANGE PROPERTIES, SIR! STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN TO THOSE WHO COMMIT EVIL WHILE WEARING THE DEVIL'S MASK!

PHAH! MERE SUPERSTITION!

YOU CANNOT DISGUISE YOUR TRUE NATURE FROM THE DEVIL'S MASK, SIR! TAKE WARNING!

A GOOD SALES TALK! HERE IS YOUR REWARD! NOW THE DEVIL'S MASK BELONGS TO ME!

LET US HOPE, SIR, THAT YOU WILL NOT HAVE CAUSE TO REGRET THIS PURCHASE! I HAVE DONE MY BEST! NOW IT IS IN THE HANDS OF THE FATES!

JACK KARVEN DIDN'T PAY MUCH ATTENTION TO THE ECCENTRIC OLD MASQUER'S WARNING! HE TOOK HIS PURCHASE HOME TO TRY IT ON!

NO ONE WILL RECOGNIZE ME WHEN I AM WEARING THIS!

THE MASK SLIPPED INTO PLACE OVER KARVEN'S FEATURES, WITHOUT SEAM OR JOINT! IT SEEMED TO MOLD ITSELF PERFECTLY TO HIS FACE!

I CAN GO TO VIOLETTA'S MASQUERADE TONIGHT, AFTER ALL! NONE OF HER FAMILY WILL KNOW ME! I'LL PERSUADE VIOLETTA TO RUN AWAY WITH ME --- BECOME MY WIFE!

LATER THAT NIGHT, WEARING THE MASK, KARVEN MADE HIS APPEARANCE AT THE MASQUERADE PARTY!

YOU HAVE YOUR INVITATION, SIR?

NONSENSE! DOES LUCIFER NEED AN INVITATION FROM MERE MORTALS?

DON'T ANNOY ME, LACKEY! OR I WILL SEND YOU TO BOIL IN THE FIRES OF INFERNO!

HA-HA! THAT FELLOW IS PLAYING HIS ROLE TO THE LIMIT!

HE CERTAINLY IS!

UNNOTICED IN THE CROWD, KARVEN LOOKED AROUND FOR VIOLETTA! HE REFUSED TO DANCE WITH ANY OF THE WOMEN WHO APPROACHED HIM, NOR DID HE JOIN IN THE REVELRY! FINALLY HIS STRANGE ACTIONS ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF VIOLETTA'S FATHER!

HMMM! SOMETHING FAMILIAR ABOUT THAT FELLOW WEARING THE DEVIL'S MASK!

I BEG YOUR PARDON! THAT'S A WONDERFUL MASK YOU'RE WEARING! IT... IT HARDLY SEEMS LIKE A MASK AT ALL!

EH? OH, YES! IT *IS* INTERESTING, ISN'T IT?

THAT VOICE! CAN IT BE...? WOULD HE HAVE THE NERVE?

I CAN RECOGNIZE MOST OF THE GUESTS DESPITE THEIR DISGUISES! BUT I REALLY CAN'T SEEM TO PLACE YOU!

INDEED?

SUDDENLY, VIOLETTA'S FATHER'S EYES NARROWED WITH RECOGNITION! HE KNEW THE IDENTITY OF HIS MASKED VISITOR NOW!

YOU'RE JACK KARVEN! I WARNED YOU NEVER TO COME TO THIS HOUSE AGAIN!

THEY WERE STANDING IN AN ALCOVE, OUT OF HEARING OF THE OTHER GUESTS! VIOLETTA'S FATHER WORKED HIMSELF INTO A FURY!

YOU'RE NO GOOD... A GAMBLER AND A CHEAT! YOU ONLY WANT MY DAUGHTER BECAUSE OF HER FORTUNE! WELL, YOU WON'T GET A CENT OF IT! SHE'S ENGAGED TO ANOTHER MAN!

VIOLETTA ENGAGED? YOU LIE!

YOU'VE FORCED HER INTO IT! VIOLETTA LOVES *ME*, DO YOU HEAR? NO OTHER MAN CAN HAVE HER!

L-LET..GO...

KARVEN IGNORED THE GASPING PROTEST OF THE OLDER MAN! HIS FINGERS TIGHTENED IN THE BLUBBERY FLESH... TIGHTENED INTO A VISE! ABRUPTLY, THE CORPULENT BODY SAGGED, LIFELESS!

I'VE *KILLED* HIM! WELL, HE DESERVED IT... THE SWINE!

I'LL FIND A PLACE TO HIDE HIS BODY! NO ONE SAW WHAT HAPPENED! NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW....

KARVEN DRAGGED THE LIFELESS BODY OF VIOLETTA'S FATHER OUT INTO THE GARDEN! AS HE WAS HIDING IT BEHIND THE BUSHES...

EEEEK!

WHAT'S GOING ON THERE?

GOOD HEAVENS! A DEAD MAN!

HELP! MURDER!

TOO BAD! THEY CAME ALONG AT JUST THE WRONG MOMENT!

KARVEN FLED INTO THE HOUSE! ALREADY THE ALARM WAS OUT, AND THE EXITS WERE BLOCKED! HE HEARD THE SOUND OF RAGING FOOTSTEPS IN THE CORRIDORS DRAW CLOSER! AND THEN HE HEARD SOMETHING ELSE!

ERIC, DARLING, THERE'S NEVER BEEN ANY OTHER MAN IN THE WORLD FOR ME! YOU MUST BELIEVE THAT!

VIOLETTA'S VOICE!

SLOWLY, KARYEN PUSHED OPEN THE UNLOCKED DOOR! WITHIN THE ROOM HE SAW HER, HIS BELOVED VIOLETTA, AND ANOTHER MAN! THEY WERE OBLIVIOUS TO EVERY-THING EXCEPT THEM-SELVES!

I LOVE YOU, ERIC!

NOTHING WILL EVER PART US, MY SWEET!

BEHIND HIS DIABOLICAL MASK, JACK KARVEN'S RAGE DISFIGURED HIS FEATURES, AND THE MASK PRESSED CLOSE... SO CLOSE HE WANTED TO RIP IT FROM HIS FACE!

VIOLETTA... IN THE ARMS OF ANOTHER! THE TRAITRESS! SHE'LL PAY FOR THIS... PAY!

THERE HE IS! THE MAN IN THE DEVIL'S MASK! HE'S THE MURDERER!

THERE HE GOES!

HE'S GETTING AWAY!

YES, JACK KARVEN MANAGED TO ELUDE HIS PURSUERS! BUT HE DIDN'T GO FAR! A FEW MINUTES LATER HE WAS AT THE WHEEL OF HIS CAR, IN THE SHADOWS NOT FAR FROM VIOLETTA'S HOME!

HE'LL BE LEAVING SOON!

THERE HE IS! ERIC... THE MAN SHE LOVES! I'LL FIX HIM!

THE GEARS GROUND FROM FIRST... TO SECOND... TO HIGH... AS THE HEAVY CAR SPED DOWN LIKE A JUGGERNAUT!

AND THEN...

YAGHH!

KRUNCH!

BEFORE THE ECHO OF THE BRUTALLY MURDERED MAN'S SCREAM FADED AWAY, KARVEN FLED AGAIN! HE HEARD THE OUTRAGED CRIES OF WITNESSES TO THE SLAYING!

HE DELIBERATELY RAN THAT FELLOW DOWN!

IT'S HIM--- WEARING THE DEVIL'S MASK! GET HIM!

A POLICEMAN JOINED THE CROWD PURSUING KARVEN! AFTER A WARNING SHOUT, A BULLET WHISTLED NEARBY!

YOU IN THE MASK--- HALT!

WHANG!

WHEW! THAT WAS CLOSE! BUT I MADE IT TO MY OWN HOUSE!

SAFE IN HIS APARTMENT, KARVEN LOCKED THE DOOR SECURELY AND...

THEY KNOW I'M IN THIS BUILDING! THEY'LL SEARCH THE APARTMENTS ONE BY ONE! BUT THEY'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO PROVE IT WAS ME!

ALL THEY CAN IDENTIFY ME BY IS THIS DEVIL'S MASK! I'LL TAKE IT OFF---DESTROY IT BEFORE THEY COME! THEN THERE WON'T BE ANYTHING TO CONNECT ME WITH THE MURDERS!

HEAVY FOOTSTEPS TRAMPED IN THE HALL OUTSIDE KARVEN'S DOOR! A FIST KNOCKED ON THE DOOR PANEL, AND A ROUGH VOICE SOUNDED...

OPEN UP IN THERE! IT'S THE POLICE!

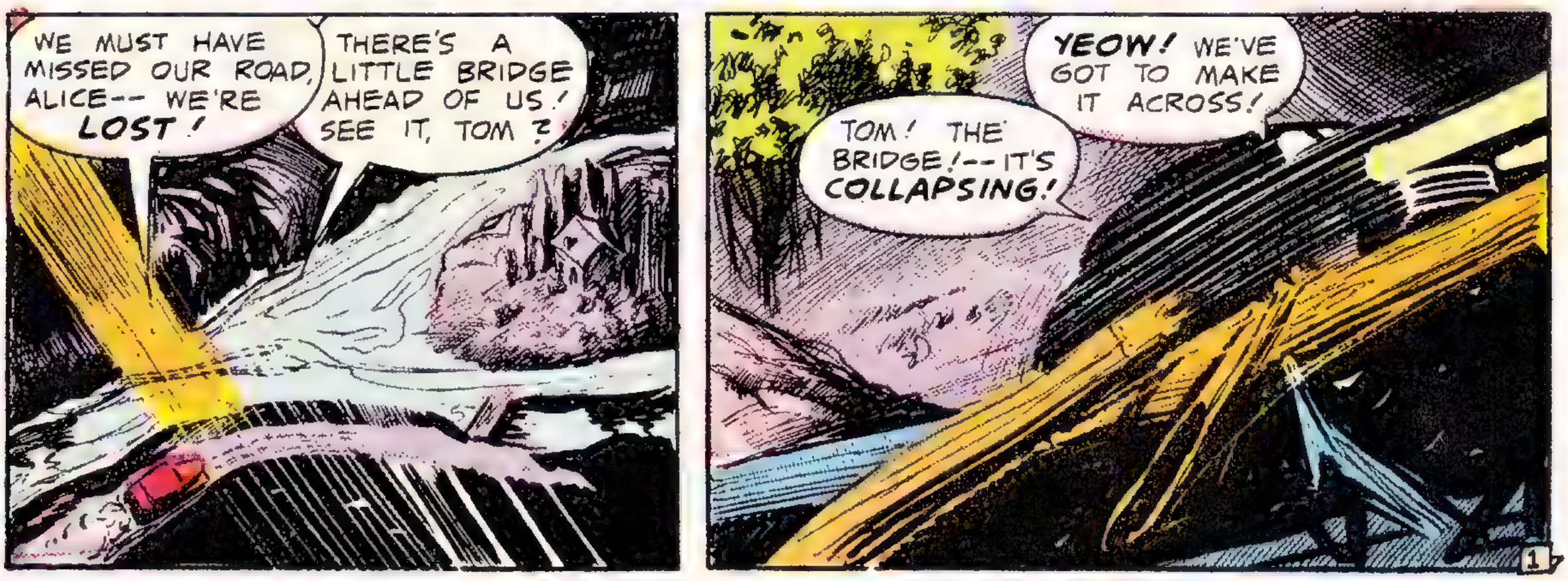
BUT KARVEN DIDN'T MOVE! HE WAS STARING AT HIS REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR! NOW HE KNEW WHAT THE OLD MASQUER MEANT ABOUT THE CURIOUS POWER OF THE DEVIL'S MASK! KARVEN WAS RID OF THE DISGUISE...BUT HIS OWN FACE WAS NOW SHAPED IN THE EXACT IMAGE OF.... THE DEVIL'S MASK!

HEH-HEH! THEY DIDN'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE IDENTIFYING JACK KARVEN AS THE KILLER! NO, SIRREE! AND WHEN THEY SENTENCED HIM TO HANG, HE HAD--HEH-HEH-- THE DEVIL TO PAY!

CAN THE DEAD RETURN TO COMPLETE THE THINGS THEY FAILED TO DO IN LIFE? FATE MAROONED ALICE AND TOM WENTWORTH ON THIS STORM-SWEPT LITTLE ISLAND, AND THEY FOUND THEMSELVES INTRUDERS IN THE **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** OF THE **DEAD!** IT WAS A NIGHT OF TERROR, WHEN THEY REALIZED THAT...

ONLY THE DEAD LIVE HERE!

YOU'RE AFTER IT, TOO! BUT YOU'LL NEVER FIND IT! IT'S MINE --ALL MINE!
GET OUT OF HERE! WE DON'T WANT YOU HERE!
WE'VE GOT THINGS TO DO --MANY THINGS TO DO!
ALICE, LOOK AT THEM! THEY-- THEY'RE DEAD PEOPLE!
EVERETT RAYMOND KINSTLER


WE MUST HAVE MISSED OUR ROAD, ALICE-- WE'RE LOST!
THERE'S A LITTLE BRIDGE AHEAD OF US! SEE IT, TOM?
TOM! THE BRIDGE!-- IT'S COLLAPSING!
YEOW! WE'VE GOT TO MAKE IT ACROSS!
1

Eerie #10, December – January 1952 – 1953. Art: Everett Raymond Kinstler. Publisher: Avon.

WOW! SURE WAS A NARROW SQUEEZE!

WHERE DO YOU SUPPOSE THIS LITTLE ROAD LEADS TO?

ON FOOT THEY FOLLOWED THE ROAD, AND IN A MINUTE OR TWO...

WE'RE ON A LITTLE ISLAND IN THE RIVER! WITH THAT BRIDGE GONE, THERE'S NO WAY OF GETTING OFF! WE'RE STRANDED HERE!

SEEMS TO BE A HOUSE, THERE UNDER THE TREES! LET'S GO SEE!

THERE'S A LIGHT IN THE HOUSE! SEE IT?

GOOD! I'M GLAD SOMEBODY LIVES HERE! COME ON!

IT WAS TOM WENTWORTH'S VACATION. WITH HIS YOUNG WIFE, ALICE, HE WAS ON A SUMMER AUTO TRIP. TO THEM, NOW, THIS WAS NOTHING MORE THAN AN INTERESTING ADVENTURE, BUT...

LOOKS LIKE A YOUNG COUPLE!

THEY SEEM TO BE ARGUING!

SUDDENLY THE SILHOUETTED FIGURES VANISHED AS THE COUPLE MOVED BACK INTO THE ROOM! AND...

COME ON, WE'LL INTRODUCE OURSELVES!

HOPE THEY WON'T MIND! ANYWAY, WE CERTAINLY CAN'T HELP BEING MAROONED HERE!

STRANGE SILENCE!

THAT'S QUEER--THEY DON'T ANSWER!

THIS STORM--MAYBE THEY DON'T HEAR US! THE DOOR'S UNLOCKED--LET'S CALL FROM INSIDE!

HELLO THERE! CAN WE COME IN?

THE LIGHT'S IN THE SITTING ROOM-- THAT'S WHERE THEY WERE! OH, TOM, THERE'S SOMETHING AWFULLY STRANGE HERE!

AND IN THE SITTING ROOM...

THIS CANDLE SEEMS TO BE THE ONLY LIGHT IN THE HOUSE! WHY SHOULD PEOPLE HIDE FROM US?

TOM! LISTEN!-- OUT THERE IN THE HALL-- FOOTSTEPS!

CREAK! CREAK!

THERE'S SOMEBODY WALKING ALONG THIS HALLWAY!

I CAN'T SEE ANYBODY! OH, TOM--I'M SCARED!

CREAK!

CREAK

SOMEONE-- SOMETHING PROWLING HERE!--AND NOW, SUDDENLY THERE WERE FAINT MURMURING VOICES! CHILLED WITH HORROR, ALICE AND TOM STOOD FROZEN!

CREAK! CREAK!

IT'S UNCLE EZRA! HERE HE COMES, ELLEN!

OH, BOB, MAYBE WE CAN FIND OUT WHERE HE HID IT!

THE WENTWORTHS FOLLOWED THE VOICES TOWARD THE ENTRANCE TO THE CELLAR...

OH, TOM, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

SHHH!...

TOM WENTWORTH HAD NEVER BELIEVED IN GHOSTS! HE WAS A FELLOW NOT EASILY FRIGHTENED! BUT NOW...

HOLD THE CANDLE, ALICE! AT LEAST THIS FELLOW'S REAL ENOUGH!

HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

YEOW! LEMME ALONE!

HE WAS A POWERFUL OLD FELLOW! SUDDENLY TOM WAS STRUGGLING WITH HIM, AND...

HEY, TAKE IT EASY! I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU!

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE AFTER! YOU WANT THE GOLD! BUT YOU CAN'T HAVE IT! IT'S FOR ME!

THEN...

LEMME UP! LEMME UP!

SURE, I'LL LET YOU UP! --IF YOU STOP FIGHTING ME AND TELL ME WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!

COME UPSTAIRS! IT'S NO GOOD DOWN HERE! I THOUGHT I COULD FIND THE GOLD DOWN HERE! BUT I GUESS I'M WRONG! I--I CAN'T SEEM TO REMEMBER!

HE'S OFF HIS HEAD! C'MON, ALICE, WE'LL TAKE HIM UPSTAIRS!

AND IN THE SITTING ROOM...

WE SAW A YOUNG MAN AND GIRL IN HERE! WHERE ARE THEY? AND WHO ARE YOU?

THEY'VE COME BACK! THEY'RE AFTER IT, TOO! BUT THEY CAN'T HAVE IT!

WE--WE HEARD THEM TALKING! THERE WAS SOMEONE ELSE! THEY CALLED HIM UNCLE EZRA

UNCLE EZRA? HE'S *HERE*? I--I KNOW ALL ABOUT *HIM*! BUT I DON'T LIVE HERE! I'M PETER GUINESS-- JUST A FRIEND OF THE FAMILY! I CAME HERE ONLY TONIGHT! STRANGE THINGS ARE GOING ON HERE!

IT WAS A WEIRD, GRUESOME STORY! EZRA CARTER HAD BEEN A HERMIT, LIVING HERE ALONE WITH HIS HIDDEN GOLD! THEN HIS NIECE, ELLEN, AND HER YOUNG HUSBAND, BOB, HAD COME TO VISIT HIM, AND...

THEY SAID UNCLE EZRA.. WAS INSANE! THEY WOULD HAVE LOCKED HIM UP--PUT HIM AWAY--BUT *HE* KNEW THEY WERE REALLY AFTER HIS GOLD! SO ONE NIGHT, HE *KILLED THEM!*

K-KILLED THEM?

AN INSANE KILLER? AND HE'S LURKING IN HERE *NOW*?

--KILLED THEM UPSTAIRS!--HACKED AT THEM! LEFT THEM WELTERING IN THEIR GORE

SOMETHING'S DRIPPING DOWN--FROM UPSTAIRS!

DRIP! DRIP!

WHA--?

IT'S BLOOD!

THEY WANTED HIS GOLD AND HE KILLED THEM! THEY DESERVED IT! HA, HA!

TOM--THAT OLD MAN'S DEMENTED! HE-HE COULD BE THE KILLER!

THERE ARE GRAVES OUTSIDE THE HOUSE--I REMEMBER PASSING THEM! COME ON, I WANT TO SEE THEM!

THE FAMILY GRAVES WERE CLOSE TO THE HOUSE! AND AS ALICE AND TOM RUSHED OUTSIDE...

WE'VE GOT TO FIND UNCLE EZRA'S GOLD, ELLEN, DEAR!

HE WON'T LET US! HE WANTS IT FOR HIMSELF, BOB!

OH, TOM! THEY--THEY'RE DEAD PEOPLE!

THE CORPSES OF THE MURDERED BOB AND ELLEN CARTER!

UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF THE DEAD!

AFTER WE WERE BURIED, THE POLICE SEARCHED EVERYWHERE FOR UNCLE EZRA'S TREASURE! THEY COULDN'T FIND IT!

WE'LL FIND IT! WE'LL LEAVE IT LYING EXPOSED-- THE POLICE WILL GET IT! --AND THEY'LL SEND IT TO UNCLE ALAN, OVER IN LONDON! HE'S THE RIGHTFUL HEIR!

AND NOW, AS TOM WENTWORTH TURNED TO GAZE AT THE LITTLE HEADSTONES...

ALICE! LOOK! THAT--THAT MAN WE WERE TALKING TO--I'LL BET HE'S EZRA CARTER! AND HE COMMITTED SUICIDE!

TOM--HERE HE COMES!

EZRA CARTER 1910-1952 DIED BY HIS OWN HAND MAY HE REST IN PEACE

IT'S MY GOLD! YOU CAN'T HAVE IT! NOBODY CAN HAVE IT BUT ME!

WHA--?

EVERYBODY WANTS MY TREASURE! BUT IT'S MINE--ALL MINE! I'LL NEVER REST TILL I GET IT! HA, HA, HA! IT WILL LIE IN THE GRAVE WITH ME! THAT'S WHERE IT BELONGS! HA, HA, HA, HA, HA!

DESPERATELY TOM WENTWORTH FOUGHT! BUT THIS GHASTLY ADVERSARY HAD SUPER-HUMAN STRENGTH!

I KILLED ELLEN AND BOB BECAUSE THEY WANTED MY GOLD!--AND I'LL KILL YOU, TOO!

OHH!

ULP!

THEN, SUDDENLY, THE MURDEROUS THING FROM THE GRAVE SAW THE TWO OTHER WATCHING SHAPES!

OH, BOB, LOOK! UNCLE EZRA'S KILLING HIM!

TOM FELT THE HORRIBLE, CLAMMY GRIP ON HIS THROAT DROP AWAY! AND AS HE SCRAMBLED TO HIS FEET...

WE'LL FIND IT, ELLEN! WE'LL FIND IT!

YOU KEEP AWAY FROM HERE! IT'S MINE! MINE!

THROUGHOUT THE LONG, STORM-FILLED NIGHT TOM AND ALICE WENTWORTH HUDDLED IN THEIR CAR, LISTENING TO THE GIBBERING VOICES OF THE DEAD!

WE MUST FIND IT, ELLEN! WE MUST!

NEVER!--NEVER!

HA HA

WITH THE DAWN THE GRISLY FACES HAD FADED INTO SILENCE! THE LITTLE ISLAND, WITH ITS SINGLE DESERTED HOUSE, STOOD REVEALED IN THE DAWN LIGHT. AND NOW...

A RESCUE BOAT IN THE FLOOD!

THEY SEE US!

AND LATER, AT A POLICE STATION OF A NEARBY VILLAGE...

SO YOU WERE MAROONED ON CARTER ISLAND ALL LAST NIGHT! THAT PLACE HAD A NASTY TRAGEDY ABOUT A YEAR AGO! OLD MAN CARTER WENT INSANE, MURDERED HIS NIECE AND HER HUSBAND, AN' THEN COMMITTED SUICIDE!

WE HEARD ABOUT IT!

YOUNGER BROTHER OF THE OLD MAN--ALAN CARTER--FLEW FROM LONDON FOR THE FUNERAL! EZRA WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE A GOLD HOARD! RIGHTFULLY BELONGS TO ALAN, NOW!--BUT WE CAN'T FIND IT!

YOU MIGHT TRY DIGGING UP THE CELLAR FLOOR, CHIEF!

WE DID! WE SEARCHED EVERYWHERE!

IT'S THERE, SOMEWHERE!

THEY SAY WEIRD THINGS GO ON THERE AT NIGHT--STORMY NIGHTS ESPECIALLY-- LIKE LAST NIGHT! YOU SAID YOU THINK YOU HEARD SOME OF THAT GHOST STUFF, EH?

WE SURE DID, CHIEF! WE SURE DID!

EZRA CARTER'S HOARDED TREASURE HAS NEVER BEEN FOUND! THE DESERTED OLD HOUSE HAS BEEN SEARCHED MANY TIMES-- BUT ONLY BY DAYLIGHT! IT'S NO PLACE FOR THE LIVING AT NIGHT--INTERFERING WITH THE UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF THE DEAD!

WHO KNOWS WHAT CREATURES ROAMED THIS EARTH WHEN IT WAS YOUNG? ...WHO CAN SAY THAT THESE CREATURES HAVE EVER TRULY **DIED**? WHO KNOWS WHAT STRANGE INCANTATIONS HAVE THE POWER TO AWAKEN AND CALL THEM BACK THROUGH THE MISTS OF TIME FROM...

BEYOND THE PAST!

YOU'RE VERY LUCKY TO GET PERMISSION TO SEE THE NECRONOMICON, PROFESSOR. IT'S THE ONLY ONE IN THE STATES.
LIBRARIAN
AH, HERE'S THE PASSAGE I WAS LOOKING FOR. VERY INTERESTING. I'LL COPY IT AND TAKE IT HOME TO TRANSLATE COMPLETELY.
HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THE **NECRONOMICON**? **NO**? THAT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE YOU'VE LED A **NORMAL** LIFE...A LIFE IN WHICH THAT DREADED ENCYCLOPEDIA OF EVIL HAS NEVER ENTERED...
The Thing
LOU MORALES

The Thing #11, November – December 1953. Art: Lou Morales. Publisher: Charlton.

CAREFUL, PROFESSOR. THERE'S DANGER IN TAMPERING WITH FORCES ABOUT WHICH MAN KNOWS SO LITTLE. GRAVE DANGER...

DAD, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE UP ALL NIGHT WITH ONE OF THOSE MUSTY OLD BOOKS OF MYTHS, ARE YOU?

NO, LINDA. I'VE GOT A PAGE OR SO OF TRANSLATION FROM THE NECRONOMICON TO DO, THEN I'LL GO TO BED.

BE CAREFUL, DAD. I KNOW IT'S SILLY, BUT I.. I HAVE A FEELING THAT SOMETHING.. EVIL IS GOING TO HAPPEN.

WHY, WHAT COULD HAPPEN, DEAR? THIS IS ONLY AN ANCIENT SUPERSTITION!

A BIT HARDER THAN I THOUGHT. MY STUDIES IN ANCIENT LANGUAGES ARE COMING IN VERY USEFUL. I'LL HAVE IT IN A MOMENT!

I'VE GOT IT NOW, I THINK. LET ME SEE...

I CAN'T SLEEP. THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG..HORRIBLY WRONG! I WISH DAD WOULD COME UP AND GO TO SLEEP.

YES, LINDA... VERY WRONG.. FOR MEN TO BE TAMPERING WITH THE TIMELESS FORCES OF EVIL...

LET ME SEE... THE FORMULA FOR CALLING THE GOD XNAPANTHA IS GIVEN... AND A WARNING!

...but call XNAPANTHA at your peril, for he ~~does~~ drinks life and flesh. When he is ~~not~~ awakened he will never sleep till he drinks that which wakens him.

I CAN IMAGINE SOME ANCIENT CREATURE CALLING XNAPANTHA ON SUCH A NIGHT. AND I HAVE THE FORMULA. I WONDER IF...

XNAPANTHA ..XNAPANTHA..CHRTLU .. XMONDII...

WHAT WAS THAT? I HEARD SOMETHING.. STRANGE!

I'M GOING DOWNSTAIRS TO SEE IF DAD'S ALL RIGHT!

I..I'VE SAID IT, AND NOTHING HAPPENED! I GUESS THAT PROVES...

NO... NO... GO BACK... DON'T... ARGHH!

DAD... DAD..WHAT IS IT?

OOHHH...

SEE, DEAR READER? ISN'T IT MUCH BETTER..AND SAFER TO LET THE POWERS OF EVIL SLEEP? WHEN THEY AWAKE..THEY AWAKE THIRSTY!

The Thing

The END!

The WITCHES' SABBATH

THIS WEIRD RITE DATES BACK TO THE DAWN OF TIME AND IS STILL SECRETLY PRACTICED. THE WITCHES AND SORCERERS GATHER IN A SECRET GROVE AND PERFORM OBSCENE RITUALS AND SPELLS. THE **SABBATH** IS CLIMAXED BY A HUMAN SACRIFICE TO THE DARK MASTER, **SATHANAS!**

THE WITCHES AND SORCERERS ARE SAID TO FLY FROM MILES AWAY AND ASSEMBLE AROUND THE GREAT STATUE OF SATAN. AN INCANTATION IS MADE AND A **SALAMANDER** OR FIRE LIZARD IS CONJURED UP TO LIGHT THE SACRIFICIAL BLAZE.

LIVE FROGS ARE TORN APART IN A HIDEOUS RITUAL DEVISED TO RAISE THE DEAD FROM THEIR GRAVES. THE CORPSES ARE FORCED TO SPEAK AND REVEAL THE SECRETS OF THE PAST AND FUTURE.

EACH WITCH HAS A FAMILIAR, A SMALL ANIMAL SUCH AS A CAT OR A MONKEY. THESE ARE IMPS THAT TAKE THE SHAPE OF ANIMALS TO HELP IN THE CASTING OF SPELLS.

AFTER DRINKING A DRUGGED POTION, THE ENTIRE ASSEMBLY DANCES A **WITCHES' ROUND.** THEY JOIN IN COUPLES AND WHIRL INSANELY AROUND THE FIRE.

AS THE FIRST RAYS OF DAWN TOUCH THE TREE TOPS, THE FIRE DIES. THE EVIL HORDE FLEES WITH THE DARKNESS. THE **WITCHES' SABBATH** IS OVER!

THE GIANT FIGURE OF SATAN IS SET AFLAME AND A CHILD SACRIFICED BEFORE IT. THE INFERNAL MASTER RISES FROM THE SMOKE TO RULE OVER HIS SUBJECTS.

THE END

Nightmare #3, October 1953. Artist unknown. Publisher: St. John.

LOUIE BRINK, HOODLUM, DIDN'T BELIEVE IN WITCHES NOR IN THEIR CURSES--BUT HE WENT BEYOND THE BARRIERS OF THIS WORLD TO ESCAPE...

THE WITCH'S WICKED WORDS

GET THEM AWAY FROM ME, YA BLASTED WITCH! THIS ISN'T THE WAY YA SAID I WAS GONNA DIE! I DON'T WANNA BURN!

YOU WON'T, LOUIE BRINK! YOU'LL DIE THE WAY I CURSED YOU THAT NIGHT YOU KILLED ME!

THAT NIGHT WAS ONLY A FEW HOURS AGO--BUT TO LOUIE BRINK IT SEEMED A THOUSAND YEARS PAST! HE HAD BROKEN INTO THE WITCH'S SHACK TO ROB HER--AND SHE CAUGHT HIM AT IT...

BUT YA AIN'T GONNA SQUEAL TO THE COPS, YA OL' HAG!

OW-W!

THE WITCH SAGGED TO THE FLOOR AND WITH HER FINAL CACKLE OF LIFE SHE BREATHED A CURSE UPON LOUIE BRINK...

Y-YOU WILL DIE THE WAY YOU LIVE, LOUIE BRINK-- **BY THE GUN!** THAT IS MY DYING CURSE UPON YOU, SCUM OF THE WORLD!

HA! YOUR CURSE IS AS PHONY AS YOU ARE, YA OLD HAG!

The Hand of Fate #25, December 1954. Art: Larry Woromay. Publisher: Ace Magazines.

LOUIE LAUGHED AT THE WITCH'S CURSE -- BUT HIS LAUGHTER DIED QUICKER THAN THE HAG HAD DIED -- AND AS HE CAME OUT OF HER SHACK . . .

CA-RIPES! BULLETS ZINGIN' OVER MY HEAD! IT'S THE COPS! THEY MUST'A HEARD MY SHOTS!

HALT!

I BETTER SCRAM -- AN' FAST -- OR THAT BLASTED WITCH'S CURSE WILL COME TRUE!

OF COURSE IT WILL, LOUIE BRINK! YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY FROM A CURSE! WHEREVER YOU GO YOU'LL DIE AS YOU LIVED -- BY THE GUN!

THAT CRUMMY HAG IS HAUNTIN' ME -- AN' THE COPS ARE STILL COMIN' WITH THEIR GUNS! MAYBE I CAN SHAKE THE SPOOK AN' THE BULLS BY TAKIN' A DIVE OFF THIS BRIDGE!

I'LL GO AFTER HIM, PETE! YOU GET TO A CALL BOX AND NOTIFY THE RIVER POLICE!

OKAY, MIKE! THAT HOOD DROPPED HIS HAT HERE AND HIS NAME'S INSIDE -- LOUIE BRINK!

THAT CRAZY COPPER CAME IN AFTER ME -- BUT HE'S SWIMMIN' RIGHT BY!

HA! I GAVE THEM THE SLIP! I MUST'VE BEEN NUTS TO WORRY ABOUT THAT WITCH'S CURSE COMIN' TRUE!

IT WILL COME TRUE, LOUIE BRINK! YOU CAN NOT ESCAPE IT! YOU'LL DIE THE WAY YOU LIVE... BY THE GUN!

LOUIE ESCAPED THE POLICE THAT NIGHT--BUT THERE WAS NO ESCAPE FROM THE GHOST OF THE MURDERED WITCH AS HE SNEAKED THRU THE DARK TOWARD THE GANG BOSS'S HIDEOUT...

SHUT UP, YA BLASTED HAG! I GOT AWAY FROM THE COPS--THAT PROVES I AIN'T GONNA DIE!

BY THE GUN, LOUIE BRINK... THAT'S THE WAY YOU WILL DIE!

HI, BOSS! I PULLED AN EXTRA JOB TONIGHT AN'...

...AN' YA GOT EVERY COP IN TOWN LOOKIN' FOR YA! THEY KNOW IT WAS YOU WHO KILLED THE WITCH --AN' THEY'VE ALREADY BEEN HERE!

YA CAN'T STAY HERE! GET OUT, YA TRIGGER-HAPPY JOKER OR...

MY PAL ROSCOE SAYS I'M STAYIN'!

BLAM BLAM

NAIL HIM, BOYS--HE RUBBED THE BOSS!

THE GANG! I--I DIDN'T KNOW YOU GUYS WERE IN THE BACK ROOM!

BUT YA AIN'T GETTIN' ME!

AFTER HIM! DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY OVER THE ROOF TOPS!

CRIPES! THAT BLASTED WITCH'S CURSE IS WORKIN'! THE WHOLE GANG IS AFTER MY HIDE -- WITH GUNS!

HOLY SMOKES! THERE'S NO PLACE TO RUN ANYMORE! I'M TRAPPED! IF I JUMP I'LL GET SPLATTERED AN' IF I— I DON'T...

THEN YOU WILL DIE AS I SAID YOU WOULD, LOUIE BRINK.. BY THE GUN!

I AIN'T GONNA DIE BY A GUN OR ANY OTHER WAY, YA BLASTED OL' HAG! THIS SKYLIGHT IS MY WAY OUT!

CA-RIPES! WHAT KINDA JOINT IS THIS!

IT'S MY TIME MACHINE LABORATORY! BUT WHO IN BLAZES ARE YOU AND WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I'LL ASK THE QUESTIONS, PROF! DOES THAT TIME MACHINE GADGET WORK?

I' DON'T KNOW! I HAVEN'T TRIED IT BECAUSE I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET A VOLUNTEER TO GO ON A TIME TRIP!

YA GOT ONE NOW! BUT WORK FAST-- THERE'S A GANG AFTER ME! WHAT DO I DO FIRST?

STEP INSIDE! I'LL SET THE DIALS TO RECORD WHAT TIME AND PLACE YOU LAND IN!

THERE HE IS-- INSIDE THAT GADGET! LET HIM HAVE IT!

NO! DON'T SHOOT! THE TIME MACHINE IS ON! IF ITS SENSITIVE CONTROLS ARE JARRED SOMETHING DREADFUL MAY HAPPEN!

THE GANG IGNORED THE PROFESSOR'S PLEAS AND THEIR BULLETS CHOPPED INTO THE TIME MACHINE! THEN, SUDDENLY THE CONTRAPTION EXPLODED INTO A BRILLIANT BALL OF ELECTRICITY . . .

ZZZ

NOBODY KNEW WHERE LOUIE WAS--NOT EVEN LOUIE! BUT HE KNEW HE WASN'T DEAD BECAUSE AS HE WHIRLED THRU THE FUNNEL OF TIME HE WAS STILL HAUNTED BY A THOUSAND FACES OF THE WITCH HE HAD MURDERED . . . .

YOU WILL DIE!
THE WAY YOU LIVE!
BY THE GUN!
BY THE GUN!
THAT IS MY DYING CURSE!
YOU WILL DIE!

OVER AND OVER AGAIN THE VOICE OF THE OLD HAG REPEATED THE CURSE UNTIL LOUIE SCREAMED IN AGONY! THEN HE HEARD HER NO MORE--AND HE STOPPED SPINNING--BUT THE SIGHT HE SAW MADE HIM TREMBLE...

CA-RIPES! WHAT KINDA PLACE DID I LAND IN? LOOK WHAT THEM CHARACTERS ARE DOIN' TO THAT OLD LADY!

DEATH BY FIRE TO ALL WITCHES!
LET THE FLAMES COSUME THE DAUGHTER OF THE DEVIL!
BUT I'M NOT A WITCH--I'M NOT! I-I...OW-W-W!

THEY'RE ALL BLABBIN' IN SOME KIND OF FUNNY LINGO--AN' THEY'RE ALL DRESSED LIKE PEOPLE DID A LONG TIME AGO! MEBBY ONE OF 'EM CAN UNDERSTAND MY KIND'A TALK!

HEY, THERE! I'M A STRANGER HERE, PAL! WHAT PLACE IS THIS! AN' WHAT YEAR?
MEIN GOTT! INDEED YOU ARE A STRANGER TO GERMANY! AND YOUR GARB IS UNUSUAL--EVEN IN THESE MODERN DAYS OF 1450!

1450? WOW! I SURE TRAVELLED--AN' I SURE MADE A SUCKER OUTTA THE GANG AND THE WITCH'S SPOOK! HER CURSE CAN'T COME TRUE NOW--'CAUSE GUNS WEREN'T EVEN INVENTED IN 1450! HA!
MY CURSE WILL BE CARRIED OUT, LOUIE BRINK!! YOU WILL DIE--BY THE GUN!

THE GERMANY OF 1450 WAS AT THE HEIGHT OF ITS WITCH-MANIA AND THE CROWD WHICH HAD WATCHED ITS LATEST WITCH-BURNING BEGAN TO GATHER AROUND THE STRANGE ZOOT-SUITED SIGHT NAMED LOUIE BRINK...

WHO ARE YOU AND WHERE DO YOU HAIL FROM? I HAVE BEEN TO MANY LANDS BUT NEVER HAVE I SEEN SUCH MANNER OF DRESS AS YOU WEAR!

I'M AN AMERICAN--FROM THE YEAR 1954! IT'S THE LAND AND AGE OF MIRACLES! THINGS LIKE JETS, DEEP-FREEZERS, AUTOS--THINGS YOU PEOPLE HAVE NEVER SEEN!

LIKE FOR INSTANCE THIS WRIST WATCH! HERE, LISTEN TO IT.

MEIN GOTT! THE THING IS BEWITCHED. IT BEATS LIKE A HUMAN HEART!

NAW, IT'S A GADGET FOR TELLIN' TIME! AN' THIS IS A CIGARETTE LIGHTER...

OBSERVE! FIRE LEAPS UP FROM HIS FINGER-TIPS!

ONLY A WITCH HAS SUCH POWER!

JA! HE IS A WITCH!

LET'S BURN THE WITCH AT THE STAKE!

SEIZE THE CURSED WITCH! YEE-E-E-E!

GET YOUR PAWS OFF'A ME, YA JERKS! I AIN'T NO WITCH! EVERYBODY IN 1954 HAS SEEN A WRISTWATCH AN' A LIGHTER!

BUT THAT WAS 1450--AND THE WITCH-HUNTING GERMANS HAD NEVER SEEN THE EVERYDAY GADGETS OF THE FUTURE. TO THEM IT WAS WITCHCRAFT--AND TO THEM, LOUIE WAS A WITCH...

BRING THE FAGGOTS! WE SHALL BURN THE DEVIL'S SON AT THE STAKE WHEN WE CATCH HIM!

CA-RIPES! THE WHOLE BLASTED TOWN IS OUT TO MAKE A HUMAN TORCH OUT OF ME!

HOLY SMOKES! THEY'RE COMIN' FROM ALL DIRECTIONS! I'M SURROUNDED- TRAPPED!

YES, LOUIE BRINK--THE TIME FOR YOU TO DIE IS HERE!

BUT THIS AIN'T THE WAY YOUR CURSE SAID I WAS GONNA GO! HELP ME--DO SOMETHING! I DON'T WANT TO BURN!

OF COURSE I'LL HELP YOU, LOUIE BRINK! LOOK INTO YOUR BACK POCKET!

HUH? YEAH! MY ROD! I FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT!

NOW I'LL SHOW YA SOME REAL MAGIC, YA WITCH-CRAZY GOONS!

HE IS THE MOST HORRIBLE WITCH OF ALL! NONE HAVE HAD THE POWERS HE HAS! WE MUST SIEZE HIM!

ONLY ONE BULLET LEFT-- AN' THEY'RE STILL COMIN' TO BURN ME!

BUT THEY WON'T GET ME! I'LL OUTFOX 'EM!

THE GUN BARREL WAS COOL AGAINST LOUIE'S THROBBING TEMPLE-- THEN SUDDENLY IT WAS BLAZING HOT AS HE PULLED THE TRIGGER...

BLAM

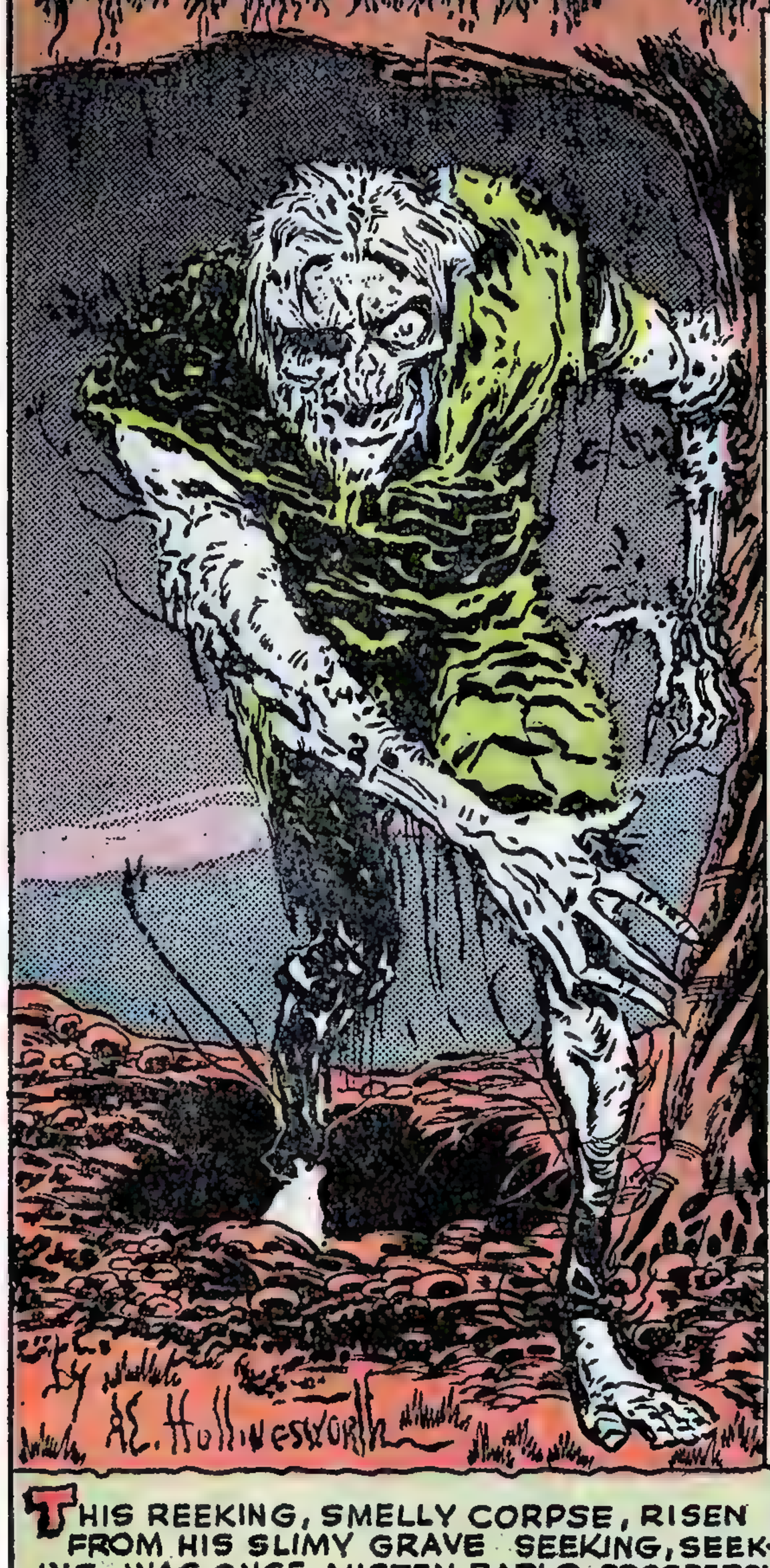
THE WICKED WITCH'S WORDS CAME TRUE!

YOU DIED THE WAY YOU LIVED, LOUIE BRINK-- BY THE GUN--YOUR GUN!

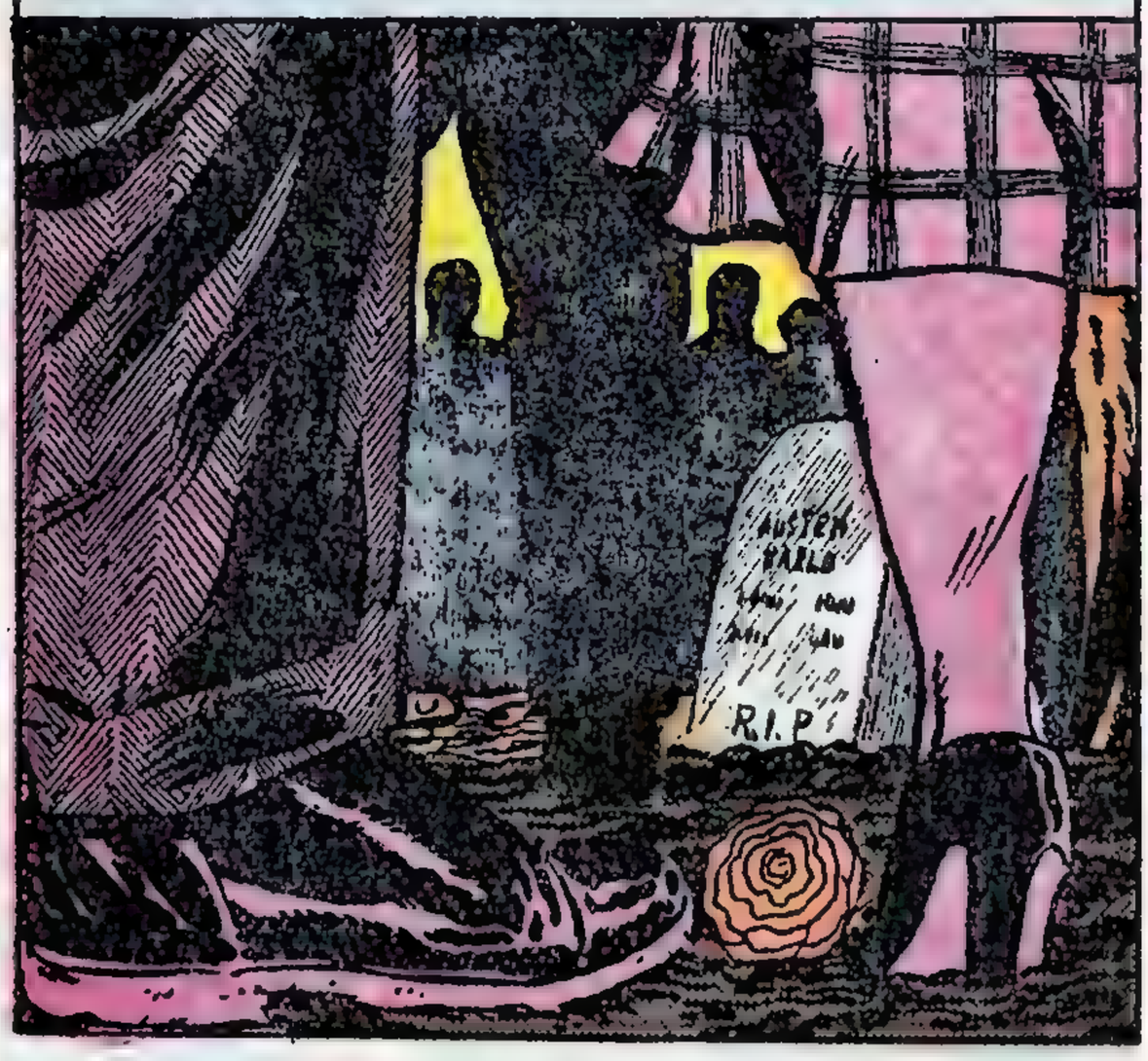
THE END

WELCOME GHOULS, TO ANOTHER WELL FERTILIZED DARK MYSTERY OF A GREEDY SISTER PLOTTING FOR AN INHERITANCE— BY LYING, CHEATING, MURDERING! WATCH OUT READERS, FOR HER SOUL IS AS SLIMY AND PUTRID AS THE DECAYING BONES IN THE GRAVE! I KNOW... I AM THE GRAVE KEEPER NOW. HEH! HEH!

The HORROR of the WALKING CORPSE

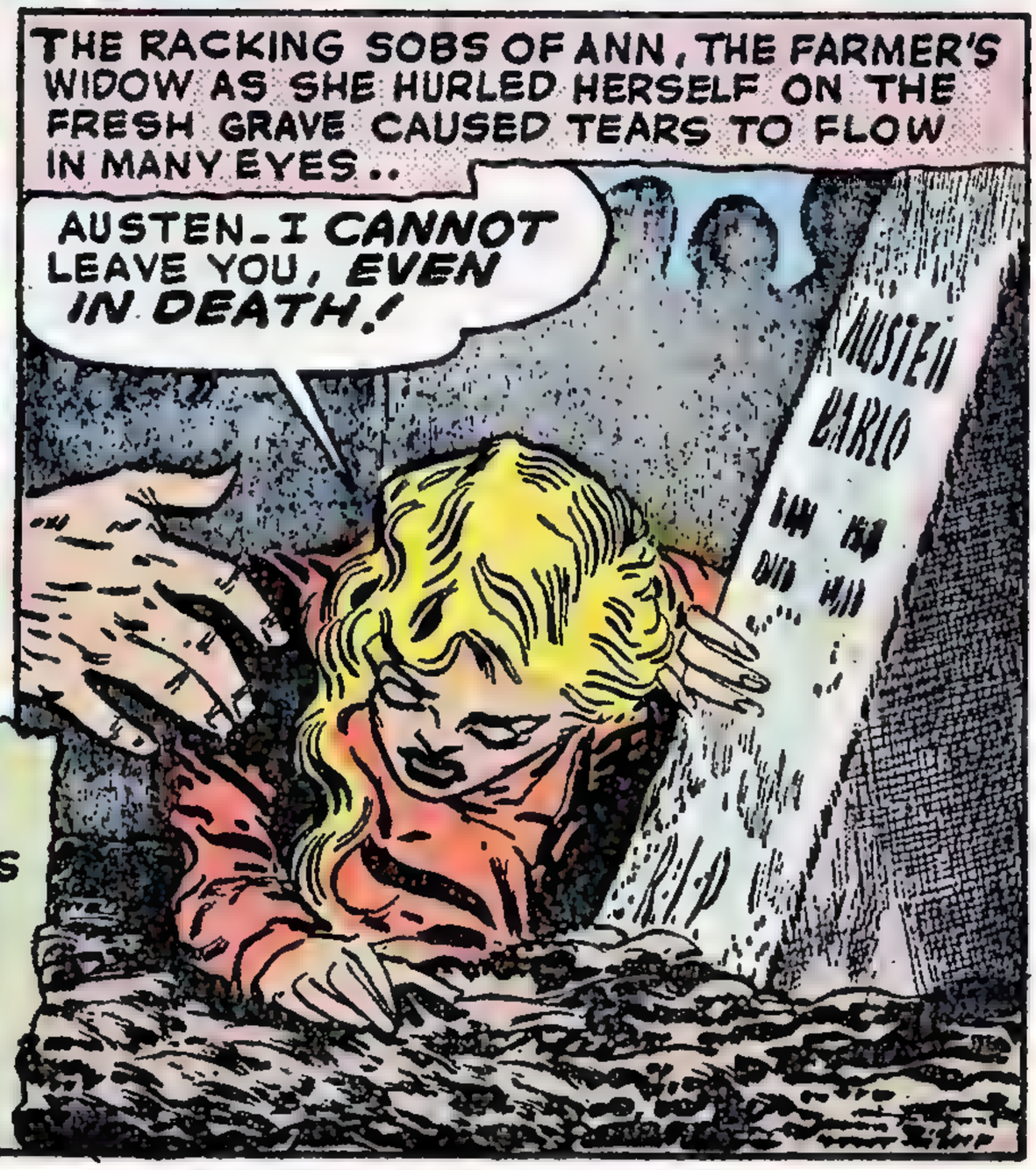


NOT LONG AGO, THIS REEKING, DECAYING THING WAS AUSTIN BARLO, A RESPECTED, LOVED MAN. WHEN HE DIED SUDDENLY, NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS CAME FROM FAR AND WIDE TO MOURN HIM AND BURY HIM...



THE RACKING SOBS OF ANN, THE FARMER'S WIDOW AS SHE HURLED HERSELF ON THE FRESH GRAVE CAUSED TEARS TO FLOW IN MANY EYES..

AUSTEN—I CANNOT LEAVE YOU, EVEN IN DEATH!



THIS REEKING, SMELLY CORPSE, RISEN FROM HIS SLIMY GRAVE SEEKING, SEEKING, WAS ONCE AUSTEN BARLO, PROSPEROUS HARD WORKING FARMER, HAPPILY MARRIED TO THE SIMPLE BUT ADORING, ANN. ONLY AFTER DEATH, DID THE EVIL IN THE FAMILY COME FORTH. AND A SUDDEN, STRANGE POWER IN THE EARTH FORCED THE DEAD TO RISE AND SEEK RETRIBUTION!

A.C. Hollingsworth

Dark Mysteries #16, February 1954. Art: A.C. Hollingsworth. Publisher: Master Comics.

ANN'S POOR SISTER, PRISCILLA, AND HER HUSBAND, PETER, KEPT CLOSE TO ANN. SO CLOSE, THAT ANN FELT LIKE A PRISONER.

IT'S LUCKY WE LIVE CLOSE BY SO WE CAN BE NEAR YOU IN YOUR SORROW!

TH-THANK YOU, PRISCILLA. BUT PLEASE LEAVE ME ALONE FOR A WHILE!

OF COURSE, AUSTEN WAS NOT ALWAYS A PUTRID, DECAYING THING OR A NEWLY DEAD CADAVER. ONCE HE WAS A LOVING, SUCCESSFUL FARMER, ASSISTED BY HIS ADORING ANN.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO HELP ME, ANN, OUT HERE.

I CAN NEVER LEAVE YOU, AUSTEN!

AND THEY HAD A STRANGE FRIEND, JACOBUS, WHO SOLD THEM FERTILIZER AND ALSO ADORED THE FAITHFUL ANN...

YOU SELL US FERTILIZER TO MAKE US RICH AND GIVE US COMPANY TO MAKE US HAPPY!

YAH, YOU ARE MY FRIENDS, I SHALL ALWAYS TRY TO HELP YOU!

BUT NOW, EVERY NIGHT, FOR MANY NIGHTS AFTER THE FUNERAL ANN STOLE AWAY TOWARD THE COLD AND LONELY GRAVE WHERE HER BELOVED AUSTEN LAY AND STAYED UNTIL DAWN..

AUSTEN, AUSTEN, I CAN'T BEAR IT WITHOUT YOU. YOU WERE SO FAITHFUL!

AS ANN'S EYES LIGHTED ON HER OWN NAME MARKED ON THE DOUBLE GRAVESTONE JUST AS SHE HAD ORDERED, AN EMOTION OF WILD JOY SEIZED HER.

SOMEDAY I WILL LIE NEXT TO YOU FOREVER, MY DARLING!

ONE NIGHT RETURNING HOME FROM THE GRAVE, ANN FOUND PRISCILLA AND PETER WAITING, STRAINED, FIXED SMILES ON THEIR LIPS. THEY HAD LEARNED THE SECRET OF HER NIGHTLY VISITS...

ANN, DEAR, WE'VE COME TO LIVE WITH YOU FOR A WHILE. AND KEEP YOU AWAY FROM THAT GRAVE!

IT'S NOT RIGHT FOR YOU TO VISIT AUSTEN'S GRAVE EVERY NIGHT!

WHAT SHALL I DO? HOW CAN I GET OUT TO BE WITH AUSTEN!

PREVENTED FROM VISITING AUSTEN'S GRAVE, ANN DECIDED ON A NEW, MACABRE PLAN ...

YES! I'LL BRING AUSTEN HERE! BARNEY WILL HELP ME!

THE NEXT DAY, DOWN AT THE BARN, ANN IS PLEADING FRANTICALLY WITH OLD BARNEY, THE HANDYMAN...

BARNEY, YOU MUST HELP ME GET AUSTEN'S BODY, WE WILL BRING HIM TO MY ATTIC. HELP ME AND I'LL PAY YOU WELL!

IT SOUNDS *CRAZY* BUT I'LL DO IT!

UGH!

AND SO THE EMBALMED DECAYING CORPSE OF AUSTEN WAS STEALTHILY BROUGHT TO THE MUSTY OLD ATTIC AND TENDERLY PLACED ON AN OLD SOFA BY ANN AND BARNEY...

NOW, MY BELOVED, I CAN COME TO YOU EVERY NIGHT - UNTIL I JOIN YOU IN ETERNITY!

AND NIGHTLY, ANN VISITED THE DEAD AUSTEN...

FEARFUL SHE WOULD SOON BE CAUGHT WITH AUSTEN'S BODY, ANN BEGAN TO CALL ON MR. WILKENS, THE UNDERTAKER.

AND SO MR. WILKENS, I WANT THE NEW MAUSOLEUM BUILT. WILL YOU TAKE CARE OF THE DETAILS - MAKE IT AS BIG AS MY ESTATE WILL BUY - AND HURRY!

IF YOU INSIST, MRS. BARLO..

REST IN PEACE

ONE DAY, BACK AT ANN'S HOUSE, HER SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW WERE ANGRILY DISCUSSING HER...

SHE STILL SNEAKS OUT WITHOUT OUR KNOWING? WHAT'S SHE UP TO?

I'VE WATCHED THE CEMETERY. SHE DOESN'T GO THERE!

ONE THING IS CERTAIN, HUSBAND, SHE CAN'T LAST LONG GOING ON AS SHE IS - AND THEN I INHERIT THE WHOLE FARM!

YOU'RE A SMART GIRL, PRISSY!

A FEW YEARS AGO, PRISCILLA WAS A LITTLE GIRL PLAYING WITH HER SISTER, ANN; TODAY HER GREED-BITTEN SOUL PLAYED WITH EVIL MACHINATIONS...

PETER, I FOUND OUT WHERE ANN WAS TODAY. SHE VISITED THE UNDERTAKER!

D'YA THINK WE SHOULD PAY HIM A CALL TOMORROW, DEAR?

TWO HUMAN SPIDERS SAT IN THE UNDERTAKER'S OFFICE THE NEXT DAY, SEEMINGLY SPINNING THEIR WEB...

YES, PRISCILLA, YOUR SISTER-IN-LAW ORDERED AN ELABORATE MAUSOLEUM FOR HER HUSBAND'S REBURIAL AND PLANS TO ALTER HER WILL SO THAT HER ESTATE WILL COVER THE COSTS!

HER MIND'S A LITTLE UNSETTLED, YOU KNOW!

REST IN PEACE

AT BREAKFAST, THE NEXT MORNING, AFTER ANN'S NIGHTLY VIGIL WITH THE BODY OF AUSTEN - UP IN THE ATTIC, PRISCILLA MAKES A DESPERATE EFFORT TO DISTRACT ANN FROM GOING TO THE LAWYER'S....

ANN, DEAR, I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU. NO MAN DESERVES SO MUCH DEVOTION AS YOU'RE GIVING AUSTEN'S MEMORY!

YOU'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND THE DEPTH OF OUR LOVE!

THEN THE PLOTTERS HATCHED THEIR EVIL SCHEME... PETER WAS THE TOWN PHOTOGRAPHER AND KNEW ALL THE TRICKS OF HIS TRADE...

I HAVE A PLAN. ALL THOSE OLD PICNIC PICTURES, I WILL USE THEM TO MAKE INTIMATE PICTURES OF AUSTEN AND YOU AND I'LL ALSO REWRITE SOME LETTERS!

ALL THAT NIGHT, PRISCILLA AND PETER WORKED FEVERISHLY, CUTTING, PASTING AND PHOTOGRAPHING MONTAGES AND REPASTING PARTS OF LETTERS AND PRISSY PLAYED HER HAND...

WH- WHAT'S THIS? NO! YOU AND AUSTEN! I DON'T BELIEVE IT! AND IN THIS LETTER HE SAYS HE LOVES YOU!

I HAD TO CONFESS, ANN - TO SAVE YOU FROM WASTING YOUR LOVE ON A DEAD MAN WHO BETRAYED YOU!

RAGE AND FURY FILLED THE SEETHING MIND OF THE SHOCKED ANN AS SHE SAW THE FAKE ROMANTIC POSES BETWEEN HER SISTER AND HER ADORED HUSBAND...

I'M SORRY, ANN, BUT AUSTEN AND I LOVED EACH OTHER!

AND I PLANNED TO KILL MYSELF TO BE WITH HIM. I EVEN WROTE A SUICIDE NOTE! HOW HE FOOLED ME!

ALL THE GRIEF AND HEART-ACHE IN ANN TURNED TO WILD HATRED AND FURY THAT NIGHT.

YOU MONSTER! MAKING LOVE TO MY OWN SISTER! *PRETENDING* TO ADORE ME! I WILL GET RID OF YOU *FOREVER!*

WITH SUPERHUMAN STR-ENGTH, ANN AND BARNEY DRAGGED THE CORPSE OF HER HUSBAND FROM THE ATTIC, ACROSS THE FIELDS, UNDER A WILLOW TREE WHERE SHE HAD DUG A GRAVE....

THERE! YOU CAN ROT HERE! THE GRAVEYARD IS TOO GOOD FOR YOU!

I HATE YOU! I HATE YOU!

SOON PRISCILLA WAS READY WITH PART TWO OF HER HASTY PLAN. IN ANN'S BED-ROOM, PRISCILLA PUT SLEEP-ING PILLS IN HER NIGHTLY GLASS OF MILK...

THIS WILL KNOCK YOU OUT, MY PRETTY SISTER!

WITH COLD CALCULATION, PRISCILLA WENT ABOUT HER MURDEROUS TASK AS HER SISTER SLEPT IN A DRUGGED SLEEP...

A *PERFECT* SUICIDE! THE GRIEF-STRICKEN WIFE! THIS GAS WILL KILL *YOU!*

PRISCILLA'S PLANS WORKED TO PERFECTION. WHEN ANN'S NOTE WAS FOUND HER DE-ATH WAS CALLED SUICIDE - OF COURSE AUSTEN'S BODY WAS FOUND MISSING

WHAT A TERRIBLE TRAGEDY! BUT AUSTEN'S GRAVE IS *EMPTY!* WHERE'S HIS *BODY?*

NOW PETER AND PRISCILLA OWNED THE FARM AND WORKED HARD TO INCREASE THE PROFITS...

IT'S GOOD TO OWN THE PLACE AT LAST, PETER!

WE'LL BE RICH, BEFORE I GET THROUGH WITH IT!

AS THEY GLOATED OVER THEIR NEW PROP-ERTY, PETER AND PRISCILLA WERE STARTLED BY THE APPEARANCE OF THE QUEER LITTLE MAN, JACOBUS...

REMEMBER, I ALWAYS SOLD AUSTEN FERTILIZER? I HAVE A NEW BRAND, IT WILL MAKE YOU RICH! YOU MUST PUT IT UNDER THE OLD WILLOW TREE AND YOU CAN HAVE IT FREE!

GIVE IT TO US, WE PROMISE!

JACOBUS WAS CONVINCING, THEY TOOK THE FERTILIZER, AND PROCEEDED TO SOW THE FARM WITH IT...

EAGERLY THE TWO SOWED THE MIRACLE FERTILIZER - AND AS THEY PROMISED JACOBUS.. UNDER THE WILLOW TREE...

THE FERTILIZER WILL HAVE TO BE GOOD TO MAKE THINGS GROW OVER THIS AREA!

TO THE DELIGHT OF THE AMBITIOUS PRISCILLA AND PETER, THE MIRACLE FERTILIZER DID ITS WORK - WITH AMAZING RESULTS...

LOOK! I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH GROWTH - SUCH FERTILITY!

PETER, WE'RE RICH!

THE FERTILIZER WAS INDEED PERFORMING MIRACLES BUT IT ALSO FERTILIZED AUSTEN'S *CORPSE*! AT THE EDGE OF THE FARM, THE SHALLOW GRAVE WAS OPENING...

WHAT POWER WAS BEING WORKED ON THE EARTH THAT THRUST FORTH, EVEN THE *DEAD*?

ON CREAKING JOINTS, THE FERTILIZED SKELETON OF AUSTEN, THE AXE SPLITTING HIS CRANIUM, GREW STRONG. .. IT ROSE FROM THE GRAVE AND GAZED TOWARD THE FARM WHERE PETER AND PRISCILLA NOW LIVED...

PLODDING SLOWLY BUT INEXORABLY, THE BONY FIGURE TOOK A STRAIGHT PATH TOWARD THE HOUSE...

PLODDINGLY, THE REEKING THING ENTERED THE HOUSE...

WAKED FROM A PEACEFUL SLEEP FILLED WITH DREAMS OF WEALTH AND POWER, PRISCILLA AND PETER LAY FROZEN IN HORROR, PARALYZED... AS THEY SAW AUSTEN'S SKELETON BESIDE THEM...

G-GO AWAY... YOU'RE DEAD!

UGH... WH-WHAT DO-YOU-WANT?

WHAT DID AUSTEN'S SKELETON WANT? YOU HAVE YOUR *ANSWER*, PETER AND PRISCILLA!

BUT NOW, WHERE ARE YOU GOING, AUSTEN? HAVEN'T YOU FINISHED YOUR MISSION?

IS IT ANN YOU'RE SEEKING, AUSTEN? SHE LIES LONELY, MURDERED, IN HER GRAVE. BESIDE YOUR EMPTY ONE...

BAY CEM

A WEIRD SOUND OF CLANKING BONES, SUDDENLY ECHOED THROUGH THE CEMETERY AND BROUGHT THE WATCHMEN, WONDERING, FRIGHTENED...

WHAT WAS THAT? MAYBE THE *GHOULS!*

THE MEN HURRIED IN THE DIRECTION OF THE EERIE SOUND...

IT CAME FROM THERE...

AUSTEN'S WALK WAS ENDED. AT LAST HE CAME TO REST OVER HIS WIFE'S GRAVE...

IT'S AUSTEN BARLO'S REMAINS! BUT WHY, *HOW?* LET'S RE-BURY IT NEXT TO HIS WIFE, *QUICK!*

ANN BARLO

THE END

Tyrant Lizard Kings
EMPIRE